

CRIME PREVENTION

Following the tragic school shootings at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon in 1998, DeFazio began work on legislation to help combat the growing problem of youth violence in America. He met with community leaders, educators, law enforcement officials, and medical professionals as well as Thurston students and their families to identify how best to address the complicated needs of troubled youth. He introduced legislation designed to prevent youths from turning to violence by providing adequate crisis intervention and support services and to limit opportunities for troubled kids to obtain firearms. DeFazio has also sponsored legislation to invest in additional school counselors and to improve access to mental health treatment.

In the 108th Congress (2003-2004)

- ▶ In the Commerce, Justice and State portion of H.R. 2673, the fiscal year 2004 Consolidated Appropriations Act, **DeFazio secured \$450,000 for the Lane County Breaking the Cycle Program.** In December of 1998, the Lane County Department of Youth Services was awarded a National Institute of Justice grant of \$2 million for two years to address juvenile substance abuse and crime. This additional funding will help to ensure continuation of the program, which will allow Lane County to complete the assessment phase of the project and document the program's effectiveness.

- ▶ **DeFazio supported the earmarking of \$80,000 for Oregon Relief Nurseries** in Eugene in H.R. 2673 to expand services to children who are at risk for child abuse or neglect. Language in the same bill also will provide Oregon Relief Nurseries with special consideration for grant funding through the Department of Justice's Juvenile Justice Program to help serve children of incarcerated parents.

- ▶ **DeFazio is a cosponsor of H.R. 4217, legislation to increase the maximum federal share of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program for at-risk kids to 75 percent of the program costs.** The program in Oregon was recently named program of the year by the National Guard, but, due to state budget problems, the program is not able to serve all the eligible students.

- ▶ **In response to the rampant spread of methamphetamine use in Oregon, DeFazio recently signed a letter to the DEA requesting a comprehensive review of our nation's precursor control laws and programs,** determination of what changes need to be made, and recommendations for legislation to Congress.

- ▶ **Earlier this year, DeFazio wrote a letter to the DEA and requesting assignment of a DEA agent to the South Coast Interagency Narcotics Task Force (SCINT) to help combat the alarming growth in organized drug trafficking and production of methamphetamine on the southern Oregon coast.** Local efforts to confront the problem are hampered by inadequate resources - a significant increase in federal resources is needed to reduce the serious challenges of increased drug trafficking in the area.

▶ **DeFazio cosponsored H.R. 3214, legislation to provide funding to test the substantial backlog of DNA from rape kits and convicted offenders throughout the country.** At a cost of between \$500 and \$1,000 per test, law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to have the tests conducted - it's estimated there are hundreds of thousands of kits waiting to be processed nationwide. The House is scheduled to vote on H.R. 5107, legislation very similar to H.R. 3214, the week of October 4, 2004.

▶ DeFazio contacted House appropriators in support of full funding of the Court Appointed Special Advocate in fiscal year 2005, which is authorized under the Victims of Child Abuse Act.

▶ DeFazio joined several colleagues in sending a bipartisan letter to the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency requesting additional action at the federal level to combat the spread of methamphetamines. The letter posed questions such as what is the federal government doing to prevent meth precursors from getting into the hands of "meth cooks", do state precursor laws have an impact on federal control efforts, and what steps are being taken to prevent illegal importation of precursors?

In the 107th Congress (2001-2002):

▶ The detain and evaluate provision from DeFazio's juvenile justice package was included in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, H.R. 1900. This provision will assist local law enforcement in detaining and evaluating juveniles caught with a firearm on school grounds for no less than 24 hours. Rep. Wu, a member of the Education Committee, inserted the detain and evaluate provision in H.R. 1900 when it was being drafted by the committee. This legislation was approved unanimously by the House on September 20, 2001. H.R. 1900 was incorporated into H.R. 2215, the 21st Century Department of Justice Authorization Act, which was signed into law on November 2, 2002.

▶ Reintroduced legislation to combat youth violence that was based on recommendations DeFazio received in the aftermath of the 1998 shooting at Thurston High School. The legislative package (H.R. 1389-H.R. 1397) includes increased funding for early childhood development programs, crisis intervention, law enforcement, and gun violence prevention.

▶ Secured \$440,000 in H.R. 3061, the fiscal year 2002 LHHS Appropriations bill (which was signed into law on January 10, 2002), for the Springfield School District's innovative Schools Plus Program. DeFazio secured an additional \$500,000 for the program in H.J.Res. 2, the fiscal year 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which was signed into law on February 20, 2003. The Schools Plus program provides academic assistance, tutoring, arts & crafts and athletic activities through a Partners for Kids program and a Mighty Mentors Program.

▶ Secured \$750,000 in H.R. 2500, the fiscal year 2002 Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations bill (signed into law on November 28, 2001) for the Breaking the Cycle program in Lane County and an additional \$750,000 in H.J. Res. 2, the fiscal year 2003

Omnibus Appropriations Act, which was signed into law on February 20, 2003.

- ▶ Received the American Federation of Teachers Quality Service Award for outstanding efforts and steadfast support for legislation to advance the interests of children, public education, public employees and working families.

In the 106th Congress (1999-2000)

- ▶ Author of a package of bills to prevent youth violence, including legislation to increase funding for crime prevention programs and require insurance companies to provide adequate coverage for mental health care. This effort came in response to the needs identified in his community following the May, 1998 shootings at Thurston High School in Springfield. The legislation is designed to prevent kids from turning to violence by providing adequate crisis intervention and support services and to limit opportunities for troubled kids to obtain firearms. DeFazio successfully increased funding for the Oregon National Guard's Youth Challenge program each year since introducing this legislation, one of the goals of the package. In addition, DeFazio's detain-and-evaluate proposal was included in both the House and Senate Juvenile Crime Prevention bills H.R. 1501/S.254, approved by the House on July 17, 1999. The detain-and-evaluate legislation would provide incentive grants to states with laws requiring law enforcement officials to automatically detain and evaluate students caught bringing guns to school.

In the 105th Congress (1997-1998)

- ▶ Led successful effort in the House to increase funding for the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program. When first considered, the House Department of Defense funding bill for fiscal year 1999 cut funding for the Youth Challenge Program by \$10 million from last year's level, putting Oregon's program in jeopardy. As a result of his efforts, the final funding bill, H.R.4103, includes a \$12 million increase over last year's funding level. Not only did this allow Oregon's program to continue, it was expanded to a full year program. The legislation was signed into law on October 17, 1998.

- ▶ Secured \$32 million in child abuse prevention funding in the fiscal year 1998 and fiscal year 1999 Labor-HHS Appropriations bills. DeFazio successfully offered an amendment on the House floor to include the funding in the fiscal year 1998 funding bill.
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